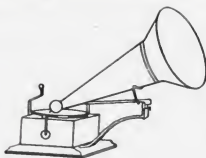


Hillandale

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Journal of the
City of London
Phonograph and
Gramophone Society

THE HILLANDALE NEWS

APRIL 1982 No. 125

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The NEW SEYMOUR Disc Machine.

Results Incomparable !

This IS the Pick of the Basket.

Rich Inlaid Dark Mahogany, Piano-Polished large Art Cabinet. Motor, the Latest and Best, with Speed Indicator and all Accessories. Seymour's Registered Telescopic Tone-Arm and Seymour's Matchless Sound Box to play Needle and Phono-Cut Discs. With an Elegant Nickel-Plated Brass Flower Horn of large size. No discount to Dealers. Rock-Bottom Prices to the Public Direct. The best Value ever offered. Securely packed in box, and Free on Rail.

N.B.—Half-a-Dozen 10-inch Double-Sided Records Presented Free during the Christmas to every Purchaser of above, with a Sample Box of the Seymour "Iridized" Needles, and one Guaranteed Sapphire set in brass stem.

OUR PRICES : : :

With Motor and 12-inc Turntable
to run 5 to 6 Records per wind . . . £7 7 0

With Motor and 12-inch Turntable
to run 8 Records per wind £8 15 0

EVERY MACHINE GUARANTEED PERFECT.



THE NEW ZONOPHONE SOUNDBOX

The outstanding feature of the Autumn trade will be the New ZONOPHONE Soundbox. Constructed on the latest scientific principles in the art of sound reproduction, this Soundbox possesses a clear natural tone-quality that is marvellous.

It Points are LOUDNESS, CLEARNESS, NATURALNESS of Tone obtained by an entirely novel method of construction, comprising a front sound refractor plate and a special resonator at the back.

The New Zonophone Soundbox is readily detachable from the tapering arm, a very important point, as it allows the user to keep the Soundbox, when not in use, out of harm's way.



Front View.—Showing the new sound refractor plate; the knife edge mounting of the stylus and the special spring for controlling tension.

Back View.—Showing the special novel construction; the resonator back and the bayonet catch for attaching soundbox to tapering arm. A turn of the wrist detaches the soundbox or fixes it immovably in position.

THE NEW ZONOPHONE SOUNDBOX

is fitted to the two special 1909 Season Zonophones: The "CECIL" at £2-2-0, and the "COMPTON" at £4-4-0.

£1,000 Plain, £1,000 Uncoloured

by Peter Adamson

Readers of HILLANDALE may well be aware of my interest in the reproduction of 78s by electrical means. In fact I have always concentrated on this more modern side of recordings in preference to experimenting with acoustic methods. Apart from having a liking for modern sound reproduction and messing about with electronics, I have always felt the need to try and extract from those old grooves more than perhaps the contemporary methods were able to do.

Now I know there are many people who wouldn't dream of using anything other than a nice E.M.G., especially for acoustic records. Certainly the advantages of a good acoustic gramophone are obvious: surface noise seems less obtrusive and is somehow "set back" against the music; the music has a solid quality about it - and of course there is no problem of getting 72 rpm or 86 rpm or whatever else is required. However the disadvantages are also all too apparent: the frequency range is distinctly restricted with no real bass and a sharply cut off treble end; there is a reliance on resonances (which is rather tiresome) and an awful confusion is made of sound which is at all complex (for instance, heavy orchestral or choral passages) - the wear on the records in these cases is not very pleasant either.

On the other hand, electrical reproduction - considered as a complete system from grooves to actual sound waves - has its own problems, too: the sound can often be rather thin without all those resonances, the surface noise becomes generally obtrusive, the sound seems diffuse and lacks some of the immediacy of the (more direct) acoustic reproduction. At first sight (or perhaps hearing) it seems that electrical reproduction can offer only two, by no means essential, advantages over acoustic: unlimited bass and treble, and unlimited volume. Any sort of smoothness or lack of those soundbox and horn resonances is taken to be merely a general feebleness and lack of excitement.

So what's to be done about electrical reproduction?

Let's take the middle section first - the amplifier. Unless the proper response is used, electrical 78s will sound dull and heavy, because modern amplifiers have a pick-up input with a frequency response designed for l.p.s; acoustic records sound horribly bland unless some correction is made: I demonstrated some of the possibilities on the BBC Radio 4 programme "Keeping Track" broadcast in 1980. The reproduction of all those crackles can be too much for some amplifiers, and a judicious amount of filtering can keep the surface within bounds (I always aim to use filtering in such a way that only when it is removed is it noticed). Incidentally, there are possible electrical means of reducing or removing the "crackle" part of surface noise - I have done some experiments along these lines, with great success in some cases.

Next, the record-playing part: one reason for the wispy quality in modern rec-

ord reproduction (78s or l. p. s) is very simple: flimsiness in construction. Those old acoustic machines had a solidity which tended to retain much of the musical signal; in modern times, such firms as Linn have ensured that their equipment, though delicate and light, is solid in a non-resonant way, with really tight-fitting bearings, strong bolts etc: the improvement so afforded has to be heard to be believed. Although some of the effect of surface noise can be reduced in this way, quite a lot can be done simply by having the right size of stylus - the .0025" size nowadays obtained as a standard is just too small for nearly all 78s of interest to collectors: two sizes are particularly useful - .0028" and .0035" cover most cases, although .004" is sometimes needed for the earliest G + Ts, and larger sizes are required for hill and dale records. Expert Pickups can supply suitable styli and diamond tips, including elliptical tips which can give a clearer definition to the sound especially near the end of a record side.

That leaves the loudspeakers - and we will now be coming to the real subject of this article. The loudspeakers have the difficult task of converting the output from the amplifier into a real sound, without adding anything themselves. In this respect, they differ fundamentally from musical instruments, which are designed to reinforce their basic sound by their resonances. The trouble is that mechanical moving parts (and other parts supposedly rigidly supporting them) all have their own resonances, and what is worse, they can back these up with mass - that means that a loudspeaker cone takes a while to get moving and then won't stop when told to do so! In order to get around some of the difficulties, modern loudspeakers are generally arranged so that a large cone unit (woofer) reproduces only the bass range, a unit with a very small light cone (tweeter) deals with the treble), and often there are mid-range units as well.

Unfortunately, the multi-unit system, although it can offer a frequency response which is better balanced between bass and treble, introduces two serious disadvantages (in addition to those already mentioned):

- 1) The divider circuit used to separate the bass and treble (and if necessary mid-range) frequencies introduces anomalies at the cross-over frequencies, due to rapidly changing phase shifts and also isolation of the individual speaker units from the control of the amplifier, just where it is particularly needed.
- 2) The overall sound comes from several places instead of one; this introduces a lack of coherence in the sound, and worse still, the possibility of partial cancellation of certain frequencies depending on the position of the listener.

Further problems include variations in directionality ("beaming") of the sound. Altogether it is surprising that a reasonably realistic sound is at all obtainable!

ENTER FRED

Those of you who have (or have heard) the famous Quad electrostatic loudspeakers will realise the advantages offered by the relative lack of resonances in this design

(due to the extreme lightness of the diaphragms). I have always considered these speakers as very desirable, but space considerations have put me off - and anyway there were rumours of a revolutionary improvement on the way.

At last Quad have brought out their new electrostatic speakers - known to them as Full-Range Electrostatic Doublets (hence FRED!). Peter Walker of Quad has been working on this design since 1963, which must be a record gestation period for a piece of hi-fi equipment.

The old design, which has held its own for a remarkable 25 years, was unable to cover the entire audible range using only one radiating diaphragm, and so the bass and treble were handled separately, as in most electromagnetic designs. Nevertheless, the advantage of the electrostatic drive of a large radiating diaphragm area resulted in a beautifully easy and transparent sound, although suffering slightly from lack of deep bass and a directional or "beamed" sound (rather like that from a horn).

The new design eliminates the separation of treble and bass sections by means of a novel and elegant solution to the problem of the coherent reproduction of complex sounds - FRED simulates a point source. Imagine sound radiating from a single point in space: waves of sound travel out from this point in a spherical manner, equally in all directions.

Next, consider an acoustically transparent plane (or a flat, light diaphragm) between the point source and the listener - say about one foot in front of the source. Then the spherical waves of sound will intersect the plane, but as each spherical wave-front moves outwards, its intersection with the plane will be an ever-decreasing circle - the flat diaphragm will seem to have ripples of sound in it, each ripple starting from a point between you and the source and moving outwards in concentric circles to the edges.

It can be seen that if the diaphragm can be made to "ripple" with sound, the point source can be removed with the listener noticing the difference. The Quad ELS-63 speaker (to give it its more official name) performs this by simply feeding the signal from the amplifier first to the centre of the diaphragm, then to the next ring outside and so on, with an appropriate delay between the successive sections.

NEW LAMPS FOR OLD?

Now why should I be talking about a rather esoteric solution to problems from the realms of very hi fi? Well I have been lucky enough to be able to try out a pair of these loudspeakers for myself - for just a few days. Radio broadcasts, and my various tapes and cassettes, sounded so clear and clean, it was a joy to hear them. The sense of space and of sound uncluttered by resonances was quite an experience. All the background hiss seemed quite innocuous (no treble resonances being niggled), rumble disappeared (no soggy bass or cabinet resonances), and speech and piano sounded light but very solid (lack of mid-range and cross-over problems). Transients such as drums, cymbals etc. had a transparency which was uncanny.

BUT - the big surprise came when I tried playing 78s. Suddenly, I felt that crackle didn't matter, that stereo was perhaps superfluous after all.... I had at last that coherence and solidity of decent acoustic gramophones, but without the resonances.

So, if you have any sort of chance of hearing these loudspeakers, I strongly urge you to do so; it's quite an experience. If you want to buy a pair (as I hope to!) there's already a queue about a year long - what a recommendation!

And for this clear open uncoloured sound you must pay..... £1,000.

~ ~ ~ ~

Edchat

This issue is the first of a new Volume, and we mark the occasion with a new front cover design, and also a newly-typed back cover. Actually, it is not typed, but 'word processed'. The inability of modern inventors to invent convenient names for their devices is yet another weakness in so-called Progress, whatever that may be. 'Word processor' conjures up an image of mangled letters, squeezed through heated rollers and served up ready sliced and tasteless, like cheese, and like so many automatic devices, the word processor is a mixed blessing; it took far longer to set, type and correct that back page than it would have done on an ordinary typewriter, and its most impressive trick is of little use in this instance. That is to type out in front of your very eyes, while you watch in amazement, read a paper or clean your fingernails, the entire page that you have just 'programmed in', and to continue to do so repeatedly as long as you command it and keep it supplied with paper.

On the subject of inadequate terms, is it not strange that the word gramophone has disappeared from everyday use without any other word appearing in its place? 'Record player' is clumsy and in any case not felt to be relevant to the more elaborate kinds of machine, 'a hi-fi' and 'a stereo' grate on the ear, being adjectives without nouns, and abbreviated adjectives at that, 'music centre' sounds like a shop, and again is not all-embracing; 'gramophone' lost its original specific meaning long before it went out of use, so why should it not be revived as a generic term for a machine which reproduces recorded music, in contexts where to specify whether that machine is stereophonic or not, plays cassettes, tapes or discs, is self-contained, racked or spread around the room, or is cheap or expensive, is irrelevant and irritatingly detailed?

ILLUSTRATIONS:

This month's front cover shows a 1911 advertisement for Henry Seymour's current machine. Seymour was prominent in the British talking machine business up to the mid -1920s. The frontispiece shows the August, 1909 announcement of the Zonophone soundbox which is also sometimes found as the 'Exhibition Junior'. The so-called 'front refractor plate' is simply a large clip which retains the diaphragm and gaskets in place. Elsewhere we continue our Edison Bell series into the Amberol era, with an Edison Amberol advertisement for comparison.

GENUINE EDISON BELL
8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. PHONA-DISCS Now Ready.
DOUBLE RECORDS, 1/6 each.
(NINEPENCE EACH RECORD).

FIRST ISSUE. Twelve of the following titles—Try these and you will find they have as much music on them as on the 10-inch records of other manufacture—They are solid, substantial, and thick—Not gingerbread thickness—won't break.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 250 Morning, Noon and Night
1st and 2nd Selections | 281 John Willie
Dance of the Honey Bees |
| 252 Choose her in the morning
Boston Belle Barn Dance | 282 Carolina Brown
Come and have a drink |
| 253 Last Pub
I'm afraid to come home in the dark | 287 Moody and Sankey—Selection I.
Star of Bethlehem |
| 256 My Ain Folk
Moody and Sankey's—Selection II. | 289 Serves you right
I'll prove that I'm right |
| 265 My Idea of a Girl
Flip Flap | 292 Cruise of the Ancient Lights
Call round any old time |
| 266 Oh, Oh, Antonio!
Here, there, and everywhere | 295 March Austria
Hallelujah Chorus |
| 279 Tickle me Timothy
If I catch you Bending | 296 March—Mountain Gnomes
Love me and the world is mine |
| 280 Jean fra' Aberdeen
I don't care if there's a girl there | 297 March Past of the Brigade
Freedom's Flag |

Up-to date Dealers who do not want the whole sixteen will please give the numbers of the records they desire.

DIAPHRAGMS will be supplied to fit Gramophones and other types of Disc Machines—to play Edison Bell Phona Discs—which do not require sharp needles. No changing.

Six Dozen other records are prepared and will be issued in due course; amongst them are the following—Send for full catalogue :—

Drum Major; Village Pump; Genevieve; Ten thousand times ten thousand; Big Ben; Schubert's Senerade (cello); Salut d'Amour (cello); Angelus; Church Parade; Amelia Polka; Nazareth; Christians Awake; Shepherds Watched; Come all ye faithful; Gounod's Serenade; Carnation; Holy City; Zampa, Parts I. and II.; Soldiers' Chorus; Toreador (*Sam Mayo*); My Queen; Queen of the Earth; Dr. Whackem's Academy.

The Phona Cut Disc Records are the records of the future—Convenient, Musical and Durable—They play on Edison Bell Discaphones—Now Ready—See panel on front page.

EDISON BELL, 39, CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON.

November 1908.

NUMBER PLEASE?

An Explanation of the Gramophone Company's Model Numbering system, with a look at some of its anomalies.

When the Gramophone Company was founded in 1898, there was The Gramophone. It needed no model number, because it was the only model on offer. Later on, there came the coin-in-slot model; then, apparently late in 1900, a whole range of variant machines appeared, and a numbering system was introduced to identify them, based on their retail prices. Style No. 2 cost 2guineas, no 3 cost 3guineas and No.5 (the existing, 'Trade-mark' model) cost £5.10s. In 1901 new models started to appear, designed to play the new 10-inch records. In those pre-inflationary days, this was not an excuse to put the prices up; rather, the new models inherited the numbers of the old ones they replaced, along with their prices, the old models replaced being either phased out or continued at a cheaper price with a lower number.

The name 'Monarch' was introduced for most of the 10-inch turntable models, but the numbers were used also to begin with, although their relationship to the price in Pounds Sterling was gradually lost, especially at the top end of the range. The Monarch name was itself applied to various models; the Junior (No. 5) was clear enough, and the Senior, when it came (about 1905, for the 12-inch turntable version which was No. 13 and had been No.15). In between were three Monarchs, with single, double and triple springs, and to add to the confusion, the single and triple-spring versions were almost identical in external appearance, while the double spring Monarch was quite different.

In 1903 - 4 the old Trade-Mark model re-appeared in modified form as the New Style No.3 (it is often passed off by unscrupulous or merely ignorant dealers today as a 'Trade-Mark' gramophone, which it is not), and the price eventually came down to 30/-. Another cheap model was the 3a, which had an elaborately carved case and an 8-inch turntable. This subsequently gave way to a small tone-arm machine the correct name for which is a mystery and the subject of a potential learned article from someone.

The Monarch range continued until 1910; at the end of that year, just when nearly all had received new cases, it was announced that the name would be dropped in the English catalogues. To ensure that nothing could be so simple, most of the 1911 models had a gold transfer on the side giving the old name! The same change was applied to the other names by then in use- Gramophone Grands and the Bijou Grands acquired numbers like the Monarchs. Once again, old numbers were re-used, the cheapest machine being No. I and the most expensive No. XIV. The Auxeto-Gramophones continued to be so-called, without benefit of numbers.

As before, the simple consecutive numbering system proved somewhat inflexible. .

This advertisement for the newly-numbered Model II appeared in March 1911.

This version of the Intermediate Monarch (with pilasters to the case corners) had only appeared in June 1910 (the previous version was shown in our last issue).

Although this picture still shows the traditional flanged elbow, every example of this model that I have seen has had the 'plug' fitting, this being the first HMV model so equipped. Ed

DOES THIS ADDRESS INTEREST YOU ?

R. JEWELL & Co.,

RECORD STORES,

108, High St., Tooting, S.W.

(HOSPITAL FOR ALL TALKING MACHINES).

Is your Gramophone or Phonograph out of order?
Does it want Cleaning and Overhauling?
Does it want Repairing or parts Renewing?
Do you want it Converted to play 4 & 2 min. Records?

You will "SAVE MONEY" by having it done thoroughly. Send or bring your machine to us; we are experts. All types Columbia Graphophones converted by us. B.C. and B.M. machines a speciality.

RECORDS.

AMBEROLS, TWINS, RENAS, &c.
Any Title per Return of Post.

THE "B.C." AND AMBEROLS.

Clonsilla.
Messrs. R. Jewell and Co., 104, High Street, Tooting, converted my machine and also fitted their patent diaphragm. I have only to express my unqualified satisfaction with the firm's workmanship. The work of conversion is everything which they claim for it. It is as simple as the Edison attachment, while the diaphragm gives a beautiful clear reproduction, without "blast" or other disagreeable noise. I may add I have no interest whatsoever in Messrs. Jewell's firm, beyond the fact that they effected a most satisfactory result for me.

Rev. P. BUTLER, C.B.

Numerous Testimonials as above can be seen at R. Jewell & Co.,
108, High Street, Tooting, S.W.

THE NO. II.

GRAMOPHONE

As shown, £4 10s.



With Wooden Horn, in Polished Oak, £5 10s.

Complete Lists of all Gramophone, Zonophone, Twin, and Edison Machines and Records.

EVERY NO. IN AMBEROL IN STOCK.

Lists Free Anywhere. Terms arranged.

NOTE.—Every Gramophone sold by us bears the distinctive Trade Mark of



ALL KINDS REPAIRED. ENQUIRIES INVITED.

THE OLD-ESTABLISHED FIRM.

G. ROBERTS & CO.,

143, NORTH END, CROYDON.

PHONE 773.

Model VI, for example, was a hornless in 1912, costing £7.10s, and when a table grand at £10 was introduced it had to go between this and the £11 Model VII (the former Senior Monarch). Accordingly, it was called VIa. Fine - except that, a year later, a cheaper version of the VIa replaced the hornless VI and inherited its model number. Later on, the two versions were merged as a single Model VI. Thus what you mean by a Model VI will depend on the date of its manufacture.

This causes confusion for latter-day collectors that would not have worried contemporary purchasers, buying from that year's catalogue, but it must have made difficulties for dealers ordering spares, or even trying to keep track of stock which presumably did not always sell immediately. To provide a more precise identification, a subsidiary system of code letters was introduced, which appears in brackets in catalogues and is usually to be found underneath the machines themselves (which the model numbers were not).

At first, these codes consisted of two letters, of which the first was B, C or D, but there is no obvious pattern in the way that they were arrived at. In the 1913/14 catalogues a new system appeared, and this can be 'de-coded'. There are three letters, indicating in order the type of machine, the model within that category, and the cabinet wood. The first letter is fairly obvious: H=horn, L=hornless, T=table grand and G=cabinet grand. The third is even simpler: O=oak, M=mahogany and W=walnut. The second letter progressed alphabetically from the cheapest upwards, starting usually at B (presumably so that A would be available if a cheaper model were introduced later) and going up to F in the case of the horn models. Thus G. B. O. is the code for an oak model 10 cabinet grand - the cheapest of the cabinet models, the most expensive being the walnut Model 14 - G. E. W. One or two models (which were shortly to be phased out) retained their old two-letter codes.

Often, machines are found with four-letter codes; these have an extra letter between the model indicator and the timber letter, which refers to the 'mark' of the model, apparently. In practice, this means the type of motor fitted, since that was the only significant mechanical variation on most models during the period in question (1913 - 1922). As an example, the Model 2 (which had started its long life as the Intermediate Monarch) appears in the 1921 catalogue as H. C. B. M. and is described as having a single-spring motor, which it normally does, but I heard recently from a member who has a double-spring version dated 1917 and coded H. C. C. M.

In 1923, at long last a more flexible numbering system was introduced, which allowed new or extensively revised models to have a new number. Furthermore, the numbers were grouped according to category; horn models were in the 20s, hornless in the 50s, table grands in the early 100s and cabinet grands in the late 100s. Looking at the gaps between the numbers, it was clearly the grands which were thought to have the most potential for development, being 10 apart (160, 170, 180 etc.) Table grands and portables were close together (105 for the portable, 110 and 125 for the table grands, leaving too little space for the development of smaller, lighter table grands and portables which was soon to occur. In 1924, a new portable was announced, as Model 100, and two table grands, as 108 and 107. At this time,

there was presumably no expectation of the development of electrical recording and theory of matched impedance which was to render the Company's entire range obsolete overnight in 1925. When the change came, the existing cabinets were used but the portable, the table grands and the cabinets were all fitted with the new acoustic system, and their numbers went up one - 161, 171 etc. However, there was a clash in the table grand section, where the 107 should have become 108, thus destroying the whole object of the new numbering system. Instead, the 107 became 103, leaving a space for it to 'grow up' in future (as it did in 1929). 108 became 109, 110 became 111 and 125 became 126.

The biggest cabinet, 200, probably became 201, although it does not seem to have been listed in catalogues and was presumably made in small numbers. It certainly missed the next stage, when in 1926 the cabinets were re-cased and went up again (162, etc.), for 202 was allotted to one of the 1927 Re-entrant models. With these, there is an extra complication in that the two bigger models had different numbers according to their cabinet wood: 202 was oak, 203 was mahogany, and 193 and 194 likewise. This took account of the fact that the cabinets were designed in more-or-less period style in accordance with the timber used, and the fittings for oak were 'antique silver' as opposed to gilt for mahogany. The smallest Re-entrant, 163, was only slightly different in its two timbers, and all fittings were nickel.

Another odd man out was the 126, which in 1927 became a 127; the difference was in the cabinet, which acquired doors hinged within the case, like those of the 103 and 109. (The 111 disappeared about this time, probably when existing stocks of 110 cabinets had been used up. It was the oldest surviving table grand style, going back to the Model VI of around 1915).

Horizontal (console) grands were given their own numbering series, starting at 250, and the Pleated Diaphragm machines were similarly eccentric, with 460 and 510. Both models were given the new acoustic systems in 1925 and thus became 461 and 511. The latter proved so popular that it continued to be manufactured in its own right, after 510 cabinets had been used up.

In the 1930s, acoustic gramophones were degraded and gradually phased out, and the pattern changes, except for the portables, where 101 became 102, and various cheaper versions were given appropriately lower numbers - 99, 97, 88 etc. Table grands and cabinet grands came together in the 150s. This series first appeared with a bijou grand in 1926 (156), continued with the 157 of 1927 and then the 158, a seldom-seen console model of the early 30s which used the cheap No. 16 soundbox and a 157-type horn. The 1935 models were 150 (table grand), 152 (bijou grand) and 153 (console grand). Presumably they were thus lumped together as a generic identification for acoustic models in a rapidly expanding range of radiograms, radios, speakers and record-players.

As a sequel to this article, I hope to offer some hints on identifying and dating models from the limited information they often carry.

Christopher Proudfoot

BOOK REVIEWS

CAL STEWART — YOUR UNCLE JOSH

My first wax Amberol record remained only briefly in my collection. On arriving home with the record, I brought a phonograph from a cold to a warm room, slipped the record on the mandrel and, before I could complete winding, heard a loud crack and saw the cylinder cracked from end to end. This experience has made me very reluctant to play wax Amberols, and this together with a definite lack of enthusiasm for talking records has resulted in my one and only Cal Stewart record remaining unplayed for more years than I care to recall. The arrival of a biography of Cal Stewart by Randy McNutt caused a flurry of activity culminating in the playing of this record for only the second or third time and, in all honesty, it was only the first time that I listened to it.

The subject's importance in the history of recording is well established, but what I found was a man of considerable talent above and beyond most of his contemporaries in the field, who managed to set a scene in addition to telling a story. Great artists even of the calibre of Dan Leno seldom sounded at home in the recording studio, obviously missed their audience reaction and gave a stage rather than a recording studio performance.

Randy McNutt has attempted a biography of this important character, but regrettably his intensive researches have produced little information about his early life and only a framework of information about his years of fame. The date of an artist's marriage may not be very important but in this case even the year remains in doubt and, much more important, few details of activities outside the recording studio emerge. The trouble appears to be that the job has sadly been left too late and almost no survivors of this period are left.

Calvin Edward Stewart made some records about 1894, but his fame began in his forty-first year when Edison recognised his talent. His earlier life as an itinerant engine driver-cum-actor is probably forever lost in time, but his success was to continue until his death in 1913. In this period he fashioned in the imagination of his listeners a fabric of characters, particularly his own 'Uncle Josh' around his 'Punkin Cnter'. Not surprisingly these places and characters were drawn from life and the author speculates convincingly on the origin of his Punkin Center with much interest.

The book is very readable but I found the shortness of the chapters disconcerting and the absence of chapter titles renders its use for reference purposes difficult. One sympathises with the author that so much diligent research and effort has produced a few contradictions and a great many gaps. I am tempted to say that there is insufficient material to justify writing the book, but I am pleased that it has been written because it tabulates what is available and may just result in the unearthing of more information. I felt some disappointment that no attempt was made to produce a discography, but considerable difficulty would arise because the Uncle Josh records

span recording in rounds to Edison discs and Victor discs via a wide range of labels and to confound the discographer it seems that Stewart would demonstrate home recording techniques in shops by producing 'personalised' recordings for customers. This habit must confound the discographer, but it would be interesting to learn whether any of these recordings survive and some account of them.

The main interest in this artist will probably be in the U.S.A., but I have no doubt that there are devotees in most places and they will find the book essential. It can be obtained from Weathervane Books, P.O. Box 455, Fairfield, Ohio 45015, U.S.A., price \$11.00 including postage. For those who like to measure value by more mundane standards there are 110 pages, paperback, with thirty-odd photographs and illustrations, many of which are very good for this type of printing.

As a final note on my reaction to Cal Stewart's performance, I find style and material not really to my taste despite a considerable professionalism, but worst of all, the strenuous laughter is to me irritating.

Barry A. Williamson.

EDISON BLUE AMBEROL RECORDINGS, Vol. II, 1915 - 1929
(Ronald Dethlefson)

As a successor to the first volume of this title, covering the years 1912 - 1914, Mr. Dethlefson has recently produced his second volume, covering the period 1915 - 1929. This volume is a mammoth work, containing some 512 pages.

As with Volume I, it is a limited edition of 500 copies, each copy being numbered and signed by the author.

The initial chapter is a special section written by Jim Walsh, dealing with performers and music on Blue Amberols. Artists covered at length are Billy Murray, Cal Stewart, Vernon Dalhart, Walter van Brunt, Ada Jones and Collins and Harlan. There are several pages of portraits of the very many artists who recorded on Blue Amberols, and there are some rare shots of performers at work in the Edison studios.

Mr. Dethlefson has achieved the almost impossible: he has obtained on loan from museum and private sources an almost complete run of the monthly record supplements from 1915 to 1929. These supplements appear faithfully reproduced on many pages throughout the book. We are also treated to reproduction examples of the rare Edison house magazines, Edison Phonograph Monthly, Edison Amberola Monthly and Diamond Points. Also included are pages from the Edison Musical Monthly (New Zealand) and the Canadian Music Trades Journal. Diamond Disc supplements are also shown. Further cylinder slips, the basis of the first volume, are also included, these additional slips having come to

light since the publication of Volume I. There are also chapters on the Henry Ford Band/Orchestra and Blue Amberol production statistics.

The current volume is profusely illustrated with contemporary machine and record advertisements. Several plates are in full colour, showing various supplements and cylinder boxes. The author has been fortunate in obtaining a mass of material concerning the Blue Amberol records — so much so that a third volume will be necessary at some time in the future.

Volume II is printed to the same high standard as Vol. I, and is hardbound in blue cloth blocked in orange. It really is a superb book in every way. The cost is \$45.00 excluding postage. Intending purchasers outside the U.S.A. should check postage rates with their local Post Office. The book plus package should be treated as a 5lb. package.

The book is available from:

Allen Koenigsberg

Brooklyn
N.Y. 11226
U.S.A.

OR: Ronald Dethlefsen

Bakersfield
California 93306
U.S.A.

Payment to either of these addresses can be made by International Money Order or be a cheque drawn on a U.S. bank.

It is hoped that copies will also be available shortly from the Society.

John R. Dales.

Glasgow
February 1982

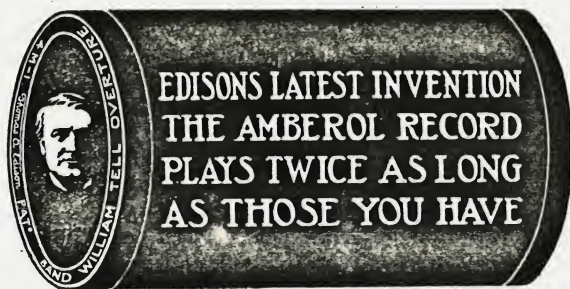
Dear Sir,

If, as Frank Andrews states on Page 332 of the February issue, Vocalion did not sell Unison records, why are the 8-in. Broadcast and Unison series identical in every way apart from the company name? Couplings, matrix numbers and label type style are often identical.

By the way, although labels such as these do not feature any great rarities, I think it a shame that no-one has produced a catalogue of the Victory discs, for example. If no one else is doing so, I would be interested in compiling such a list.

Yours sincerely,
John Cavanagh.

Could it be that Vocalion manufactured Unison discs? - Ed.



This is not done by making the Record larger or longer, but by engraving more than twice as many lines to the inch as on the regular Records.

Thus Amberol Records can be used in the standard sizes of Edison Phonographs by the addition of a simple attachment or gear.

These new Records not only play longer than any other Record now made, but they play better, their tone quality being richer, clearer and more delicate than has been possible in the past.

To Play Amberol Records on Your Present Phonograph

requires an attachment comprising a change gear and a new reproducer. Your dealer has this attachment, will put one on your Phonograph at a moderate cost, and will explain it to you.

We will be glad to send to anyone, however, a booklet describing the new attachments, describing the Amberol Records, giving a list of the music now available on these Records and giving all the other information necessary to make it possible for you to get more than twice as much enjoyment out of your Edison Phonograph as you are now getting.

Edison Amberol Records Price 1s. 6d. Each

Make Your Own Records, this is half the fun and enjoyment of owning a Phonograph. Ask for booklet, "Making Records at Home."

We Desire Good Live Dealers to sell Edison Phonographs in every town where we are not now well represented.



For Complete Catalogues, address: NATIONAL PHONOGRAPH CO., LTD., EDISON WORKS, Victoria Road, Willesden Junction, London, N.W.

PEOPLE, PAPER AND THINGS

by George Frow

Recent reference to Zonophone 78 records' being available here until the 1940s has brought in a letter from a South African member who recalls buying some eight last year from an 80-year old trading store in a by-passed village on the Karoo. He asks "Are these the last brand new Zonophone records to be bought anywhere in the World?" An interesting thought. Certainly currently-pressed Zonophone discs could be bought from the overseas counter at the Oxford St. HMV store in the fifties, though these were probably unusual dialects in what were known as race records.

Prominent on acoustic Zonophones was a light music group called the Royal Cremona Orchestra, whose very name suggests either a Court Orchestra comprising fine violinists, or else the house ensemble of a milk pudding factory. In actual fact the Cremona Musical Union or Cremona Orchestra toured London for 40 years and had made six appearances before King Edward VII when Prince of Wales. It was an octet made up of the sons and daughters of a Dr. Greenhead, a physician who organised them into an ensemble when the family financial shoe pinched. In the normal performance the players appeared in evening dress in the first half, and in various national costumes in the second, which must have been unusually colourful.

Last month saw the fiftieth anniversary of the introduction of the Decca-Polydor series to the United Kingdom. In a short run of threepenny booklets prepared by Robin H. Legge - who died soon afterwards - the culture of the German Polydor labels was introduced to the British public in a fine series that remained available until soon after the 1939 War started. This must have been a great scoop for Decca, who had started making records in mid-1929 with little noticeable success, as the surface and technical quality of the discs was very bad until Polydor came along. After that they improved, and perhaps it was that Polydor showed them the way. Nowadays many of these Decca-Polydor "Permanent Music" artists are collectors' pieces - Pfitzner, Richard Strauss, Ohms, Furtwängler, Piccaver, Ravel, Schlusnus, among many. The presentation in Decca catalogues could be confusing and irritating, the familiar "Die Fledermaus" being listed under "The Bat", and there were other linguistic gaucheries. The labels were designated DE and CA for 10-inch and 12-inch celebrities, and PO and LY for popular equivalents, a simple enigma that may have escaped some.

While thinking about Germany we are reminded of a letter in The Gramophone for June 1942 by the late Paul Offenbacher, himself a German who was involved with the early Parlophone Company in Great Britain. He then drew attention to the recent death of the composer Leon Jessel, obscurely in Berlin. Jessel, being a Jew, had fallen from favour with the authorities and in fact his last operetta "The Golden Mill" was performed in 1940 only in Switzerland. He was 71 at his death. He will ever be remembered for his "Parade of the Tin Soldiers", the best version of which is still surely by the Johann Strauss Orchester of Berlin on Blue Amberol Cylinder 26084. In America this piece is often called "Parade of the Wooden Sold-

iers", and as such may be found on record labels, but under that name it was presented by the Chauvre-Souris Ballet Company. Jack Hylton's version of the "Wedding of the Rose" on HMV B 3970 has much to recommend it, and much of Jessel's other work is reminiscent of Paul Lincke's.

The London Daily Telegraph reported in December that a Pennsylvania doctor can look at a microgroove gramophone record with its label covered and tell what music is on it, and the name of the conductor. Suspecting trickery, a magician tested the doctor using his (the magician's) own records, and the doctor is said to have come through without error. The doctor's one demand is that the records be fully orchestrated classics from the time of Beethoven and before, and among those quoted as named by him were Mozart's 40th and 41st symphonies and a digital recording of Holst's "Planets" by the Berlin Philharmonic; how this more-recent-than-Beethoven item came to be discerned is not stated. If the good doctor can genuinely read microgroove records, he must be applauded, and one presumes the matrix numbers were concealed. Most of us find it difficult to interpret the vowel sounds as depicted as "strings of beads" in scientific books of 100 years ago, and the herringbone patterns on 20-inch Pathés would be quite beyond the wildest of guesses. The article is summed up by saying that the doctor's hobby is to know every passage of hundreds of symphonies and recognise the groove patterns made by the rhythms and volumes of sound. Does any member claim to "read" record grooves, or know anybody who can?

Some issues ago the writer was privileged to review Ron Dethlefsen's book *The Edison Blue Amberol Cylinders*, Vol. 1, and its successor is noticed elsewhere by John Dales. These books have at last achieved something that all earlier similar listings have failed to do. They enable the cylinder enthusiast to date the issue of every recording, and a strong sales point that all compilers of numerical record-listings to come should seriously consider.

The music critic Alec Robertson died in January at the age of 89. In 1920 after war service he joined HMV and became head of the educational staff, leaving music for a while in 1930 to enter the Roman Church as a priest. Just before the last war he joined the BBC and was put in charge of music talks, becoming a corner-stone of "Music Magazine". In the 1950s he became Editor of *The Gramophone*, to which he had contributed in great volume almost from its inception, and he held the position for twenty years.

Stanley Holloway, who died in February at the age of 91, made a deep impression on the mind of the nation. He was a performer who had covered a wider range for a longer time than anybody, beginning in Edwardian concert parties, performing from 1912 in the last years of the true music hall, then in enormously successful staged concert parties such as "The Co-Optimists" series. He made films as early as 1921 and his first records about that time. Ten years later his "Albert" and "Old Sam" and many other northern and Cockney dialogues appeared on Columbia, and he remained much in demand right through the '30s. During and after the war he appeared in a string of successful film parts, and by 1964 when he could have retired

quite comfortably took the Alfred Doolittle part in "My Fair Lady". Since then he made many records of old-time songs, ballads and recitations, and was always a willing and likeable raconteur on radio and television. In 1935 Holloway compered the Silver Jubilee "Cavalcade of Variety", presenting before the King and Queen at the London Palladium the great survivors of the music halls. This is recorded on HMV C 2795-6, and has been transferred to l.p., and he may be found on several excellent omnibus Columbia 78s of the 'thirties. Constraints of space prevent a wider appraisal of Stanley Holloway's extensive talents on record.

Aughton, Lancs.

February 27th 1982

Dear Chairman,

I was most encouraged to read the letters of Mr. D. M. Field and Mr. J. J. Hopkinson in connection with my suggested compilation of a library of the contemporary sound of the acoustic machine.

With regard to Mr. Field's comments on stereo, although this should give a more realistic representation of the machine on playback, I would not wish any suggestion of mine to impede any form of good recording be it stereo, mono, reel-to-reel or cassette. So let us use what is available and learn by experience.

On the other hand I do most heartily endorse Mr. Field's views on electronic enhancement. This indeed would negate the whole object of the Project, which is to record in such a way that on playback we will hear, as near as is practicable, the sound of the actual machine used. Mr. Field's other point you have fully covered but I would like to add a personal comment. We are certainly not in competition with the BBC or BIRS in the sound archive business. It is their privilege to preserve our sound recording heritage. Indeed one can imagine that with laser pick-ups emerging they may, eventually, have equipment able to extract every particle of encoded signal without damage to the medium. Perhaps, being more speculative, even in time with computer synthesis, be able to rebuild from a fragment a close facsimile of the original.

Coming down to earth, dare I suggest Mr. Chairman that we might persuade your overloaded typewriter to provide a short list of what you, from your extensive knowledge of the subject, consider the benchmark machines from tinfoil to E. M. G. I need hardly say that I would like to add my name to that of Mr. Field and Mr. Hopkinson as a volunteer. My acoustic collection is modest but I am reasonably well equipped electronically. In other words, "Have microphone, will travel", or conversely would be glad to welcome anyone to my home to record their machine. Whether acoustic comes to electronic or vice versa can be a matter of mutual agreement.

J. A. McCleery.

Harrogate, N. Yorks.

22nd February 1982.

Dear Mr. Goodall,

I was interested in your saga of HMV C245 in the report of the East Fife meeting on October 14th. I cannot give a definitive explanation of the puzzle, but I think I can suggest an explanation.

1) C245 was originally issued after 1912 and before August 1914. (C202 appears in the 1912 catalogue, and C 357 is the earliest issue in the August 1914 list).

2) Matrix 3989f was used in London between late 1908 and 1916, probably 1910.

3) If Cc5650 is a matrix number (and there was a Cc series), it was probably issued early in 1925, in the last months of acoustic recording.

4) Mackenzie Rogan was given Captain's rank at the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, and was Major by the end of the War. He may well have been a Lieutenant-Colonel by early 1925.

I believe, therefore, that C245, issued in 1913, used Matrix 3989f, recorded about 1910. I suggest that, about 1925, the piece was recorded again by Mackenzie Rogan, by now a Lt.-Colonel, on Matrix Cc5650. The record was issued under the old catalogue number, C245, in 1925. This re-use of numbers is known: for example, Melba recorded "Home Sweet Home" in 1905 on Matrix 523c, and the record had catalogue no. 03049. In 1921, she re-recorded the song on Matrix Cc151, but the new recording retained the old catalogue number.

This would make C245 (3989f) the old recording (issued 1913) and C245 (Cc5650) the new (issued 1925).

Yours sincerely,

George Taylor.

~~~~~

#### AUTOMATIC 1

In his report of the January East Fife meeting, Jim Goodall refers to the HMV Model 1 Automatic gramophone, and suggests that only 100 or so of these were made. I have heard this stated before, but I have never heard any concrete evidence for it, and the number of surviving examples leads me to doubt it. It was introduced at the beginning of 1928 and ran to 1929/30. As to its original price, I have also seen some odd figures quoted, so it might be as well to set the record straight: In the 1929 catalogue, the price of the standard model, in walnut, was £125. Mahogany was available to special order, at £140. In either case, doors were available at £10 extra. These options apparently did not exist in 1928, when the basic price of £125 was the same. - Ed.

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# 200 THREAD RECORDS.

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There is no novelty or invention in making Phonograph Records, 100, 200, 300 or 400 engraved lines or "threads" to the inch. A London mechanician made 15 years ago, and still has, a most beautiful phonograph on which 100, 150, 200 or 300 threads to the inch may be played at pleasure.

The Edison Bell made and sold 200 thread Records over seventeen years ago, and are now re-commencing the manufacture.

As their cylinders are half an inch longer than the American Standard they will play from 5 to 6 minutes. The advance in the art of recording and the experience of the Edison Bell Staff will ensure the production of these records in modern up-to-date titles to suit the taste of and supply any demands that may be made by the British public. The price will be the popular **SHILLING**, there is no valid reason for its increase.

Two-hundred Thread records cannot be used by the thousands who own Gems, and the nnumerable varieties of British and Foreign made Talking Machines, Graphophones, Pucks, &c., &c, which flood the country.

All owners of Standards and Homes will not be willing to go to the heavy expense of the delicate and complicated process of having their machines "converted" to enable them to use 200 thread records, which do of necessity lose in volume and tone and also in wearing quality.

Samples of the Edison Bell new "Cristol" Record will be shortly issued.

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**EDISON BELL, 39, CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON.**

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# 160 RPM

by John C. Fesler

## ACCURATE SPEED ADJUSTMENT FOR THE EDISON CYLINDER PHONOGRAPH

Owners of Edison cylinder phonographs know that one of the hardest things to determine is the exact speed of the record. The problem is complicated by the multiplicity of speeds at which cylinders were originally recorded.

By mid-1892 the speed of Edison's musical cylinders had been standardised at 125 r.p.m., which allowed for a playing time of about 3 minutes. (From 1888 -92 the recommended speed for musical cylinders was 100 r.p.m., which with a 100 t.p.i. recording thread gave the maximum playing time of the selection "Five Minutes with the Minstrels" (October 2, 1891)). The 125 r.p.m. standard is known to have been in effect as late as November 1, 1899, by reference to the National Phonograph Company's books, but was increased to 144 r.p.m. in June 1900, when the cylinders were termed "New Process Records". These cylinders were still of brown wax.

With the introduction of the Gold Moulding process, the speed was again increased, this time to 160 r.p.m., which resulted in a playing time of 2 minutes. The old brown wax cylinders were produced until July 25 1902, but no new titles were issued after January of that year. By June 1902, the first new-titled moulded cylinders were issued, recorded at 160 r.p.m. The first one issued was Allesandro Liberati's cornet solo "Remembrance of Switzerland" (No. 8004). When the new moulded records were first issued, they were known as "New High Speed Hard Wax Moulded Records", but by late 1903 had been given the designation "Gold Moulded Records".

The 160 r.p.m. standard speed was maintained for the Gold Moulded records through their graphite process renaming as "Edison Records" in July 1908, their next renaming as "Edison Two-Minute Records" in November 1908 and their final naming as "Edison Standard Records" in January 1909 until production ended in October 1912. The speed was successfully used and maintained for the 4-minute cylinders, the wax Amberols of November 1908 and the celluloid Blue Amberols of October 1912 - November 1929. Therefore, with the exception of pre-Gold Moulded records, all Edison musical cylinders were recorded (and should be reproduced) at 160 r.p.m.

Adjusting the speed of Edison phonographs is not difficult in itself, for these either have the governor control mounted on top of the bedplate (as on Model A Triumphs, Homes and Standards) or just below the bedplate (as on most Model B machines). One crude method of judging the speed is by listening to the announcement at the beginning of the cylinder by Edward Meeker. If Meeker can be made to sound like the leather-lunged baritone that he was, then your estimate of speed is close to being correct.

Another crude method is to choose a musical record of which you know the

tempo and "sound". It helps if you are a musician and have played or sung the piece yourself. This technique will also work for records with no announcement. In any case, while the two aforementioned methods are better than an out and out guess, they are still only estimates.

The Edison literature gives us some hints on speed adjustment. The instruction sheet for a Model D Triumph gives the following directions:

"Speed of Cylinder, 160 Revolutions per Minute.

"Adjustment of Speed.

"All master records from which the Edison records are made, are recorded at 160 revolutions per minute, and to reproduce these records perfectly, it is absolutely necessary that the phonograph should run at the same speed . . . no more, no less.

"Every phonograph is adjusted to run 160 revolutions per minute, but if by accident, or through carelessness, the governor should become displaced on pinion shaft or the speed adjusting screw should be turned (where by the speed would be altered after the phonograph leaves the factory), re-adjustment may be made by holding the adjustment screw between thumb and forefinger and turning to the left to make the cylinder run slower.

"The announcement at the beginning of the record should sound perfectly natural; if not, the speed is either too fast or too slow, and can be regulated by the speed adjusting screw. A more correct way to adjust the speed of the phonograph is to start the motor running, pull out the lift lever (so as to apply the same friction as when reproducing), rest the thumb of the left hand against the top of the post at the left-hand side of the phonograph and, with the forefinger, lightly touch the gear in the driving pulley; as it revolves, take a watch in the right hand and count the number of revolutions, which should be 160 per minute. The gear should strike the finger between 26 and 27 times in ten seconds (in earlier models, the finger was struck by a screw -Ed.) and if it strikes more or less, the speed is not correct, and is to be adjusted by the speed adjusting screw. If once adjusted for the correct speed, there should be no occasion for changing."

In other machines, especially those with the speed adjustment screw under the bedplate, a different method of calibration was made available. The instruction sheet for the Model A Fireside of 1909 illustrates the technique:

". . . . . re-adjustment of the phonograph can be made by raising the top plate, taking hold of the speed adjusting screw between the thumb and forefinger and drawing it to the left, to make the cylinder go faster, or to the right to make the cylinder run slower.

"To enable anyone to set the speed correctly, two rings (cut in the rod) will be found on the right-hand side of the rod, one and six-tenths of an inch apart. With the phonograph fully wound and running at full speed, and with the repro-

ducer arm down as in reproducing, the arm should travel from one mark to the other in exactly one minute, which indicates that the cylinder makes 160 revolutions in one minute."

The gearing should be set for two-minute records for this test.


While any of the original speed adjusting methods will make the records approximately right in tempo and pitch, an easier and more accurate technique is to use a stroboscope. This has a number of black and white bars, and is used for checking the speed of rotating machinery. The disc is placed on the rotating part, in our case the mandrel, and the bars observed under an A. C. light source (not incandescent). When the speed is correct, the black bars will appear to stand still. If the mandrel is running too fast, the bars appear to drift in the direction of rotation. If the speed is too slow, they appear to move in reverse. The light source may be either a neon bulb or a fluorescent lamp. (I have always managed quite well with ordinary incandescent bulbs - Ed.)

The formula for calculating the number of bars on a stroboscopic disc is as follows:

$$\frac{F \times 2 \times 60}{\text{RPM}}$$

Where "F" is the frequency of the light used to observe the bars. In the U. K., the A. C. supply is at 50 cycles per second (Hz).

~~~~~


Four Oaks Park
Sutton Coldfield B74 2ST.

November 1981

Dear Sir,

Could I, through the Pages of HILLANDALE, appeal to readers for information on the 1930's British label PEACOCK. This was issued in several different sizes and I would welcome information on any item, irrespective of musical content. I require all the usual information: Catalogue, Matrix and Take numbers, Titles, Composers, Film or Show credits etc.

Any information, however small, would be welcome.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Dean-Myatt.

The Finest PORTABLE is COLUMBIA

Note the Novel
**EXCLUSIVE
COLUMBIA
FEATURES**

No Parts to Fix
Before Playing
Nothing to do
but
Open and Play.

Price .. £6.6s.

- 1.—No parts to fix before playing—
NOTHING TO DO BUT OPEN
AND PLAY.
- 2.—Has the famous COLUMBIA TONE.
- 3.—Equipped with Standard Columbia
Tone-Arm and No. 7 Sound Box.
These are mounted on moving panel,
automatically rising as cover is raised,
and falling into sunken chamber as
cover is closed.
- 4.—Equipped with Standard Columbia
Tone-Shutters, opening and closing
automatically as cover is raised or
lowered.
- 5.—Hinged Winding Crank which by a
single movement folds into the case.
Nothing to unscrew or remove.
- 6.—Spring-lid covered Needle-cup to hold
needles secure.
- 7.—Covered best black grained camera
cloth. All interior fittings nickel-
plated; all exterior fittings black.

"Nothing to do but
OPEN AND PLAY."

The NEW
**Columbia
GRAFONOLA**



- and it has the
Famous Columbia TONE

Write for Illustrated Descriptive Leaflet of the New Columbia Portable and Name of nearest Dealer—
COLUMBIA, 102-108, CLERKENWELL ROAD, LONDON, E.C.1.

The Punter's Grafonola

The Columbia Graphophone Co. Ltd. came late to the portable field (apart from the Compactophone which they apparently took over from Sterno and sold under the REGAL banner) and only in 1925 did they produce a portable of their own design and carrying the COLUMBIA name. One of the first advertisements for this, the Model 10a, (from 'The Gramophone' of June 1925) is shown opposite. This model gave way in the autumn of 1926 to the 110, which was basically similar and retained the self-opening tone-shutters, but shared with the new 'Viva-Tonal' models of that time a narrower tone-arm and a No. 8 soundbox. (This model is illustrated on Page 33 of '100 Years of Recorded Sound', the Society's Centenary Exhibition catalogue.)

How long the 110 remained available is unclear, but in the summer of 1927 two new portables were announced. These dispensed with the tone shutters, and had an internal reflector system. In the case of the Model 109, this was of simple design occupying a restricted space behind the motor, but the larger 112 had a diecast alloy horn inside which carried the sound to the front of the case, whence it was reflected back to the rear. The entire horn was pivoted so that it could fold into the case with the tone-arm as the lid was closed. A de luxe, stitched cow-hide version was offered as Model 111G (with gilt fittings) or 111NP (nickel-plated fittings). Neither of the cowhide versions appears to have sold in large numbers.

Another de luxe model was introduced before the end of 1927; this was the 113, which was the same as the American company's Model 160. It had nothing in common with any of the British models, and was presumably imported, either whole or in part. Its case was covered in crocodile-grained blue-grey leathercloth with padded top, with a polished wood interior and gilt fittings; the soundbox was the No. 15 (which later appeared on other British Columbias) and the tone-arm was diecast with an S-shaped gooseneck. It is large for a portable, and also very heavy. HILLANDALE for April 1929 has, on its centre pages, a reprint of part of a 1929 Columbia leaflet showing this model, as well as the 109 and 112. All 1929 models had a suffix 'a' after their model numbers to distinguish them from earlier versions; the 113 was, apparently, no different, but the others had a new soundbox (No. 9) and 'Plano-reflex' tone-arms.

There is a gap in my sources for the next year or so, and I cannot say exactly when the No. 9 soundbox gave way to the 15a. By the end of 1930, it seems that not only had this change taken place, but three new portable models had appeared. Two of these were replacements for the 109 and 112, the biggest difference being in their model numbers, which were 201 and 202 respectively. The other new model was as small and lightweight as the 113 was big and heavy; it was called Model 100 (The Cadet) and had an all-steel leathercloth-covered case, $8\frac{3}{4}$ in. by $12\frac{3}{4}$ in. Its soundbox was the 15b, which differed from the 15a in having a one-piece diecast backplate with no insulation. The well-known tendency of diecast alloys to disintegrate is all too evident in the 15b, and many Cadets are today re-equipped with the all-brass 15a.

Some Cadets also have diecast tone-arms. The 201 and 202 had a record album in the lid (record collectors who insist on jettisoning albums are particularly asked to spare a thought for machine collectors before throwing away albums which are really part of a portable - the trade-mark is usually printed to be read with the spine of the album at the bottom rather than the left-hand side. There are plenty of portables about, Columbia and otherwise, with such albums missing - has anyone an HMV in blue or red?).

In the spring of 1931, of course, Columbia merged with HMV to form EMI, but the 201 and 202 apparently continued in production under the new regime; most examples that one sees have chromium-plated fittings. The next development of which I am aware was the appearance of two rationalised EMI machines, which could both be had in HMV or Columbia form according to choice. This was in 1935, and the Columbia models were 204 and 205. They equalled the HMV 97 and 87 respectively. The 87/205 was a particularly cheap and cheerful affair with a crude, 90° gooseneck giving poor track alignment, a 9-inch turntable and a case with unrounded angles.

The 97/204 was more interesting; a truly mixed marriage, it had an HMV motor (inherited from the 99 portable), an HMV tone-arm, half an HMV-type horn, a Columbia soundbox and an HMV needle container. Gone was the ingenious folding winder that had been characteristic of Columbia portables from the 10a onwards, and gone too was the rising tone-arm. If you think BMC invented badge engineering, just see what EMI got up to make this hybrid look like one or the other make:

- 1) The soundbox is Columbia (No. 15a), but put a different mask on the front, with a Lilliputian Nipper in the middle, and it becomes an HMV (No. 21).
- 2) Previous Columbias had Garrard motors, so for the 204, the visible parts retain a Garrardish look (hollow-rim turntable, although with felt covering - blue, rather than HMV brown, for the black models, two bits cut out of the clip to echo the Garrard wire type, a Garrard speed indicator and a twist to the handle of the HMV brake).
- 3) An appropriate transfer in the lid.

Not much to it really, and some of these distinctions disappeared in later years. Subsequent changes are difficult to date, because with the emphasis on electrical machines, very little publicity was given to acoustic portables, which just went on quietly selling themselves. The original 204a gave way to the 204 b, which had a different motor and chromium fittings in place of nickel. The 97 underwent the same change, and subsequent small modifications took it to the 'd' or even 'e' stage. This may well apply also to the 204, but by 1950 there was another Columbia model, the 211, which was very similar but slightly smaller, and had the No. 24 soundbox of the short-lived 205. The final 211, 211z, was still available in 1960. The only other Columbia portable I know of, probably current in the late 1930s, was the 9000, which was basically our old friend the HMV 102, with a hand-released lid catch that necessitated fitting the winder clips in reverse. Not even BMC would have thought of that!

Christopher Proudfoot

Special Demonstration at

KEITH PROWSE

OF THE

NEW "COLUMBIA" PORTABLE

No. 112 - - - Price: £4 15 0

A New Standard in "PORTABLE" Values.

Last year's "Columbia" Portable was a marvel of value at 5 gns. The new model is greatly improved with new attractive features and yet is 10/- cheaper. It is in keeping with the 'Columbia' policy of giving the greatest possible value. The "sliding tone arm" for safety in packing will win instant appreciation while its tone will invoke praise from even the most critical.

SPECIFICATION

CABINET.—Shaped like an Attache Case, with handle and two oxydised locks. Constructed in selected hardwood, covered black Morocco-grain Camera Cloth; length 14½ ins., width 11½ ins., height 6 ins.; fitted with spring-cover Needlecup. Nickelled carrier in lid for Eight 10 in. Records.

MOTOR.—Powerful British-made Single-Spring Motor, to play 10-in. and 12-in. records; 10-in. Turntable, Velvet covered, nickelled flange. Hinged winding crank that folds into the cabinet.

TONE-ARM.—New Style Columbia Tone-Arm, operating on free bearings with perfected sound-tight joint. Slides away into receptacle when not in use.

STONE CHAMBER.—New Stereoscopic Acoustic Projector of exceptional amplification and selectivity.

SOUND-BOX.—New Columbia "No. 8" Sound-Box, as used on other models of the Columbia Grafonola.



Complete with Interior Record Carrier to take EIGHT 10" Records.

NEGRO "RACE" RECORDS

A Super-Jazz Novelty for Jazz Record enthusiasts

Special "Parlophone" Negro Records made exclusively for, and obtainable only from, Keith Prowse & Co., Ltd.

NOW READY:

- | | | |
|-------|---|-----|
| R3854 | { Golden Leaf Strut Original New Orleans | |
| | { She's Crying for Me Blues Rhythm Kings | 3 0 |
| R3255 | { If you can't Hold the Man you Love .. Pffe, C. Williams | |
| | { Mamma stayed out the whole night long and Alberta Hunter, Contralto | |
| | { and Susie, Pffe, Acc. E. Haywood. | 3 0 |
| R3256 | { Kater Street Rag .. Bennie Motens Kansas City Orch. | |
| | { Larkin Street Blues .. G. McCoennin and Pffe, Acc. E. Haywood. | 3 0 |
| R3257 | { Soap Stick Blues Arthur Sims and his | |
| | { How do you like it Blues Creole Roof Orchestra | 3 0 |

READY SHORTLY:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Dance Records.</i> | |
| R3260 | { I wonder where my easy rider's } Johnnie Bayersdorffer |
| | { riding now and his Jastola |
| | { The Waffle Man's Call Novelty Orchestra |
| R3261 | { The Armbreaker .. Clarence Jones & his Wonderful Orch. |
| | { Herald Blues Pffe, solo, Herald Thomas |
| R3262 | { Muddy Water Blues Haerlen Trio |
| | { Suitcase Blues Herald Thomas |
| R3259 | { The Blues have got me Earl Ricard |
| | { When you're really blue Shelton Brookes |

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London Meeting

December 1981

This meeting was a departure from the usual talk or recital of records. John McKeown had recently acquired a small film projector and a number of films, and the opportunity was taken to try the apparatus out on an audience. The audience was unfortunately small, due no doubt to the proximity of Christmas and the arctic weather.

Some of the films embraced our hobby, and were as follows:

An American film of celebrities, anniversaries and the like, including items on Thomas Edison and Sarah Bernhardt.

Next, one of the "March of Time" series of 1948, which was No. 10, 'In the Groove', featuring research, recording and manufacture of gramophone records up to the advent of the l. p.

A "Flip" cartoon (a Mickey-Mouse-like character)

An Edison film of 1904, taken from paper negatives - a railway film.

Another railway film, a 1904 Biograph film, "A Railway Tragedy", in which the train was seen running sometimes on the left and sometimes on the right (perhaps the cause of the tragedy?)

Other short films including one featuring Bing Crosby and Acker Bilk

A Laurel and Hardy Comedy

W. C. Field's first talkie, a golfing sketch made in 1929.

This unusual presentation was much enjoyed by the small audience and it is to be hoped that the idea will be developed at future meetings.

January 1982

The theme on this occasion was Non-commercially issued records, defined as records which were not originally on sale to the public through the normal retail outlets.

Some were of cardboard with a transparent coating, showing a picture advertisement (e.g. Dewar's Whiskey, United Dairies), some were the 4-in. Durium discs advertising John West's Salmon, B. P. Oil and other products, and there were two of the 3-in. Imperial records advertising Imperial Records. Other discs were made for special occasions, such as a Columbia issued for the launching of the 'New Viva-Tonal Graphophone', or two of the same make issued to raise funds for a Swindon Hospital in 1930 and for a Scottish Music Week. A 12-in. HMV advertised their own radio receivers in the mid-1930s, and a more modern disc advertised cigarettes to the tune of a cha-cha-cha.

An interesting connection with the gramophone industry was 'Alfred Clark's Message to his Employees in his 40th Year.' From some years earlier, we hear an American Ambassador's vicious (and, to us, hilarious) attack on Germans who had emigrated to the U.S.A. Other oddments were a bomb warning, a Tuck's postcard record and a home-recorded aluminium disc. A small audience, thanks to Bucktonitis.

2: It's a Wonderful Town

So goes the old Broadway song - and New York's still as wonderful an experience today as it was 350 years ago when this north-eastern city at the mouth of the great Hudson River was called New Amsterdam. The Edison National Historic Site is in West Orange, New Jersey, so from New York's Times Square I walked along the famous 42nd Street, and this soon brought me to the massive New York Port Authority Bus Terminal at the corner of 41st and 8th. Before boarding the Community Transit Line bus, I purchased tickets from Window 23 and made my way to Platform 72. From this platform high up in the terminal, bus No. 77 leaves every hour for Morristown, winding its way down the long spiral road within the terminal building, and then almost straight through the Lincoln Tunnel. Once under the Hudson River I had left Manhattan Island with its eight million people, and the bus wasted little time on its journey through the state of New Jersey via Route 53, Clifton, Passaic Avenue, Springdale and to Orange. The driver advised me to leave the bus at a stop known as Erie Loop/Swamp Line, and a brisk walk along a deserted Main Street soon brought me to Lakeside Avenue and the Edison Site, a total of 50 minutes in the bus from the centre of New York to the peaceful countryside of America's Garden State of New Jersey.

I recalled what I had read on Liberty Island the previous day - "Give me your tired, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" - I was doing just that, even though the temperature was in the 80s.

It was here in West Orange that Thomas Alva Edison lived and worked for forty-four years, and today the original buildings erected in 1887 for organised research and development are a tourist attraction. Out of this cradle of wonders came many inventions and improvements which made life easier and better for people everywhere. Here are exhibits like the original tinfoil phonograph of 1877, his 1889 Kinetograph and other inventions. Edison's machine shop and stockroom are still to be seen, as well as the library containing his own desk, and the chemical laboratory which has been left just as it was way back in 1931; Edison's coat even hangs on a nail at the back of the door!

The main archives building and museum storage vault were built after Edison's death, as was the full-sized replica of the original tar-papered 'Black Maria', the first motion picture studio in the world. A short walk from the laboratory buildings up a tree-lined drive is Glenmont, the handsome country estate which Edison bought in 1889. This was his thought-bench - the starting point for many of the ideas which later took form in the valley below.

Glenmont, the 23-room Edison home, reveals the domestic side of the great inventor's life. The house, built for a New York executive in 1880 and predominantly

Victorian in architectural style, today looks much the same as when Edison occupied it.

I went on a tour of the house, and almost all the original furnishings remain in place, also the many family portraits, fine paintings and prints, books by the hundred, and gifts from the great and near-great of many lands. To the end of his days Edison retained an insatiable zest to discover and invent new things, resulting in 1,093 U.S. patents. He also had many foreign patents to his credit. His last ambitious undertaking, to find a practical domestic source of natural rubber, was almost complete when he died at Glenmont on October 18th 1931 at the age of 84. In a quiet corner of the garden are the graves of Thomas and Mina Edison.....

"Forget thyself and all the World;
Put out each feverish light;
The stars are watching overhead;
Sleep sweet - Goodnight - Goodnight."

BRASS BAND RECORDINGS - AN APPEAL FROM FRANK ANDREWS.

Frank Andrews is completing a discography of cylinder and 78 rpm disc records sold in Britain of Brass Bands (NOT Military, Brass and Reed or Concert Bands) and also of instrumentalists associated with Brass Bands, whether or not accompanied by a Brass Band.

A difficult period is the late 1940s and early 1950s. Frank would like full information about any recordings on the following makes: JAMCO, HORROCKS and TAYLOR, ISIS, LEVY'S, EROICA, MEMRYDISCS, DRURY, and GRIMES of Wigan. With the last label, he wishes to know of any catalogue numbers above BB 1047, and what was on BB 1005, 1006, 1009, 1013, 1014, 1023, 1032, 1036, and 1037. These would have been issued in 1949 or early 1950.

Also required are full details of a two-disc set of recordings on the ISIS label by Ken Smith, the Australasian cornet champion, issued in November 1950; and information on any known Brass Band recordings on Woolworth's EMBASSY records, and the reverse title to "Liberty Bell" on Eclipse SC 81 (Cresswell Colliery Band).

Frank would also like details of any other recordings (78 rpm) on the 1940s and 1950s labels listed above, especially GRIMES' 50 Famous Cinema Organists records. (Grimes were expensive at 15s. for a 12-in. and 13s. for a 10-in. disc).

Another outstanding blank is Horsham Borough Band on Filmophone 470, and were there any issues of the Irwell Springs (Bacup) Brass Band on Duophone unbreakable records, other than M 133?

Please send full details of any information you have to Frank Andrews at
[REDACTED] Neasden, London N. W. 10.

The advertisement on the opposite page appeared in February 1924. There was also an HMV Nursery gramophone at the time, albeit with a normal 10-inch turntable.

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The Three Bears	Uncle Harry
Jack and the Beanstalk	Uncle Harry
The Babes in the Wood, Parts 1 and 2	Uncle Harry

ALBUM No. 2

Nursery Tunes, Parts 3 and 4	Little Mayfair Orchestra
The Jazzing Nigger	Uncle Charlie
Ten Little Nigger Boys	Uncle Charlie
Uncle Charlie's Nursery Rhymes, Parts 1 and 2	Uncle Charlie
Aladdin, Parts 1 and 2	Uncle Harry
Tom Thumb	Uncle Harry
The Sleeping Beauty	Uncle Harry
Hansel and Gretchel	Uncle Harry
Jack the Giant Killer	Uncle Harry

ALBUM No. 3

Nursery Rhymes, Parts 1 & 2	Uncle Peter's Party
Laughing Ginger Brown	Uncle Charlie
The Farm Yard	Uncle Charlie
Uncle Charlie's Nursery Mixture, Parts 1 and 2	Uncle Charlie
Cinderella, Parts 1 and 2	Uncle Harry
Little Red Riding Hood, Parts 1 and 2	Uncle Harry
Dick Whittington and His Cat	Uncle Harry
Beauty and the Beast	Uncle Harry

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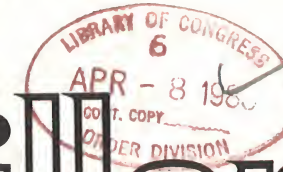
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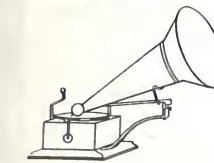
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JUNE 1982 No. 126

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